

LARCHMONT BLOCKS A GRAB.

IRELAND'S GIFT TO THE TROLLEYS
PRACTICALLY NULLIFIED.

TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE GOVERNED
BY VIEWS OF RESIDENTS, WHO VOTE
AGAINST GIVING AWAY THEIR
PART OF THE POST ROAD.

In its attempt summarily to appropriate for the purposes of a trolley system the Boston Post Road, the famous and picturesque highway of Westchester County, the Tarrytown, White Plains and Mamaroneck Railway Company received an emphatic setback yesterday. The people of Larchmont administered such a "face" to the company as to render practically valueless the franchise obtained earlier in the week in Mamaroneck. This company, it may be pointed out, is endeavoring to construct a trolley line from Rye through Mamaroneck and Larchmont to New-Rochelle. In Caleb Island, the Highway Commissioner of the town of Mamaroneck, the corporation found so ready a friend that it obtained the privilege of laying its tracks on so much of the Post Road as comes under Mr. Ireland's jurisdiction merely for the asking. In his anxiety to promote the interests of a privately capitalized concern, admittedly to the detriment of the neighborhood, Mr. Ireland was willing to give the company all it asked for, without bothering about such a detail as the obligation the trolley officials would take upon themselves in return for an enormously valuable franchise.

It was learned yesterday that, despite the appeal made to him last Wednesday by property-owners to which the whole matter carefully before reaching a decision, Mr. Ireland personally signed his consent upon the following morning. Having thus succeeded in acquiring the stretch of the Post Road between the division lines of Mamaroneck and Larchmont, the company yesterday sought permission to pass through the village of Larchmont in its endeavor to connect with the Huckleberry system at New-Rochelle.

LARCHMONT IN THE WAY.

Larchmont, however, has proved an effectual obstacle to the company's contemplated grab of the principal driving and riding thoroughfares of the suburban districts above the Harlem. With only one dissentient vote a large and thoroughly representative gathering of the inhabitants of Larchmont yesterday decided against granting the franchise asked for, and by refusing to allow the trolley line to be carried through the village, blocked further progress on the part of the company in its onslaught on the Post Road. Consequently, while the corporation has Mr. Ireland's consent to tear up the road to the boundary line of Larchmont, it is halted there, and in thus frustrating a scheme to benefit a coterie of individuals to the irretrievable ruin of the Boston turnpike, Larchmont has nullified any value that may previously have attached to the Mamaroneck franchise. It is safe to say that unless the trolley people are allowed to go through Larchmont they will never avail themselves of Mr. Ireland's generous gift to them.

The hearing called by the trustees of the village of Larchmont to consider the application of the company to construct and operate a surface railroad "beginning at the division line between the town of Mamaroneck and the village of Larchmont on the Boston Post Road, thence running southern upon and along said Boston Post Road to the division line between the village of Larchmont and the town of Mamaroneck on said Boston Post Road," was held yesterday afternoon in the village hall. The strength of the local feeling against the cutting up of the Post Road was manifested in an attendance so large that many had to stand, and in the numerous speeches which, with only two exceptions, condemned the proposition underlying the application. Unlike Mr. Ireland, whose extraordinary instances stamped him as having prejudiced the matter before him, the trustees of Larchmont came to the hearing officially unprejudiced one way or another and prepared to allow the sense of the majority of the community to govern their judgment. It was at their request, in fact, that one of the residents who attended the meeting put in a resolution opposing the application proposed by ex-Judge Warren Higley.

The trustees will make a formal announcement of their decision at a future meeting, but it can be stated definitely now that that decision will be adverse to the company.

MR. JENNINGS EXPLAINS.

The trustees before whom the hearing was held were Carlson Wendt (chairman), W. H. Campbell, Conrad Bird and Joseph S. Bird. Mr. Wendt opened the proceedings by inviting H. T. Jennings, the counsel to the company, who was present to support the application, to explain just what his corporation wanted. All that Mr. Jennings had to explain was that his company was anxious to build a trolley road along the Post Road from Mamaroneck to New-Rochelle, that it received a franchise from the Highway Commissioner of Mamaroneck and wished the trustees of Larchmont to be equally accommodating. This was about all that Mr. Jennings had to say by way of "explanation," except that he added: "We have canvassed the property-owners along the line of our proposed route, and have succeeded in securing the consent of the majority of those property-owners. The only opposition I understand, is from the people who drive away from the road. On the road itself there is little or no opposition. Only three abutting property-owners, I think, have refused their consent."

Before the end of the hearing, however, it was conclusively demonstrated to Mr. Jennings that he had been misled in supposing that the majority of the owners of property on the Post Road had acquiesced in the trolley scheme, and that so far from having a majority on his side he had so decided a minority as to be unable to state the name of a single landowner who had given a consent. No sooner, in fact, had Mr. Jennings ended his explanatory address than E. C. Tooker asked that the names of the consenting owners be read, but Mr. Jennings refused, saying, however, that he would be glad if necessary. It came out later that Mr. Jennings had no such list with him, and that his statement was based upon a misconception of information conveyed to him by one of the company's representatives.

H. T. Schriver, after Mr. Jennings had resumed his seat, proposed that the line of the trustees might be saved if a vote were taken immediately without discussion. The Chairman pointed out that since he had no objection to lessening the duration of the meeting, a vote would not in any way bind the trustees.

Colonel Henry W. Sackett, a prominent lawyer of New-York, who besides owning a country house at Mamaroneck, represented the Woodruff estate at Larchmont, said that as the Woodruff and the Elstons were the largest properties on the Elstons' side of the Post Road, the company had certainly obtained a majority of consents on the east and most important side of the road.

"I appear on behalf of the Woodruff estate," Colonel Sackett proceeded, "to oppose this application. There is a peculiar significance in the position of this estate. It grows out of the facts in which the members of the Board are familiar. The Woodruff family were the originators of this village. They established it upon a plan of which the inhabitants of the village are cognizant. In laying out the village and the streets they found it necessary in order to add to the convenience of the community that there should be a street railroad communication with the New-York and New-Haven Railroad line. They did provide this communication, but do it so well that what the company which makes its application to-day should do. They built the line upon their own property. They bought their rights of way in fact, and so contracted the road that it should not interfere with the proper uses of the highway.

This is a unique community. It is a unique village in its origin and existence, and there is no

place in America that I know of that can compare with it. As a village community it is unnecessary to comment upon it, but so far as the building of this road is concerned, everybody knows it would interfere with the original purpose of the founders of the village. The roads here have been laid out at great expense. They are all beautiful roads, in which the villagers take great pride. It is not possible to the people of this village to take extended drives or rides except on the Boston Post Road. There are other avenues upon which the trolley company can lay its lines, but there is no other road except the Post Road for riding or driving upon. The construction of this trolley road would destroy to a great extent the unique condition into which this village has grown, and which everybody must hope will continue. So we say not only for individual interests, but as owners of the larger part of the property on the east side, it is not in the village's interest nor in the interest of this village community itself that trolleys should be allowed to come here."

Colonel Sackett, whose remarks were frequently applauded, was followed by George E. Ide, president of the Home Life Insurance Company, who said:

"The situation of Larchmont is somewhat peculiar. Ordinarily, in discussing these trolley franchises, the abutting property is the property to be considered. But this village is built upon peninsula. Although many of us do not own interests in the village, we are willing to give the company all it asked for, without bothering about such a detail as the obligations the trolley officials would take upon themselves in return for an enormously valuable franchise.

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After pointing out that the people of Larchmont by refusing the application for the Post Road would not be committing themselves to a proposition that trolleys would not be useful to Larchmont, if other roads were taken for a surface railroad system, Mr. Ide went on:

"There seems to be a sort of idea throughout the country that the trolley is in some way a form of conveyance which has a perfect right to step in and take any highway for its individual interests. The village of Larchmont is not a stockholder in this company. If the line makes money the villagers of Larchmont get no advantage thereto. Then let this company go where it can do the least harm; let it take other highways except the Post Road, and then, I think, the people of this village will not make any great opposition. But one thing is certain, that you cannot win the Post Road, and you cannot give it over to a trolley system without injuring the interests of the community." (Applause.)

President Wendt next read a large number of letters from influential residents who were unable for various reasons to attend the hearing, but who wrote emphatically protesting against granting a franchise for the Post Road. Among the writers were T. J. Keveney, E. F. Heldahl, Dr. Farvoe, William Murray, A. Bryan Alley, Roger Lamson, Aaron de Cordova and A. G. Hyde.

JUDGE SCOTT'S LETTER.

Justice Francis M. Scott wrote in part as follows: "I do not believe that the trustees would for an instant consider the application favorably, even if no adverse expressions of opinion reached them, but since silence might easily be construed into acquiescence I deem it my duty as a property-owner who is deeply interested in the interests of the Manor, to protest against the granting of the application. Larchmont does not need such a line. Its rise and progress have been phenomenal, and have been accomplished without any trolley line at all. We all know as a matter of experience that a trolley line substantially isolates that part of the roadway which is included between its tracks. It is easy to grant franchises, but when they become burdensome it is next to impossible to cast off the burden. At this very moment the property-owners of an important avenue in this city (New-York) are struggling to relieve themselves of the incubus of a railroad franchise which was imprudently granted when the avenue, which has now become built up and important, was deemed to be far out of town and of little consequence."

Henry W. Eaton, manager of the London, Liverpool and Globe Insurance Company, sent the following letter:

"I do most earnestly protest against any grant of authority for any trolley or any other street railway, for the following reasons:

"Larchmont is a park, laid out for villa residences, and the property has been acquired by people who have sought that locality in order to secure quiet and retirement. The use of the Post Road by trolley-cars would destroy an exceedingly agreeable feature of residence to those who take a pleasure in driving, and would lessen the space available for vehicles of all kinds. The operation of a trolley, involving the use of bare wires carrying a strong force of electricity, is highly undesirable, as tending to increase the possibility of numerous fires simultaneously occurring by crossed wires, and the permission of this village for the use of such bare wires would be inconsistent with the regulations of the community."

E. L. Burke, who so vigorously fought the giving away of the Mamaroneck franchise, addressed the hearing on behalf of property-owners opposed to the railroad.

"The width of the Post Road," he urged, "is such that it could not be occupied by a trolley without making it impossible for carriages to pass along it. This village has for many years been put to a great expense in bringing that road to its present state of perfection. It is all very well to say that only those who do not want the trolley are the people who keep horses and coachmen, but I think that those who make that assertion saw the myriads of people—not the residents of this district—who drive and ride bicycles along the road in the summer, they would quickly perceive that there are other rights invaded than those who live here. Even if the trolley people offered to widen the road, you would have to trust to their promise, and even if they carried out their promise it would be a good many years before the road could be restored to its present condition. I am not opposed to trolleys, but I stand here representing people whose views are opposed to allowing trolley tracks on the Boston Road."

President Wendt agreed to the suggestion, and ex-judge Higley thereupon moved the following resolution:

"That the opinion of the citizens of Larchmont here assembled the franchise sought for should be referred by the Board of Trustees."

Mr. Amory put the resolution to the meeting, and it was carried with only one dissenting vote—that of Mr. Bull.

Mr. Jennings explained:

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